From: Chris Corayer
To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 1/23/02 11:28am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am writing to oppose the current settlement proposed. In my opinion it will change little, if anything.

What I would rather see happen is the following:

1) ALL file formats should be documented and open. This will allow FULL compatibility with competing office suites such as Sun's Staroffice. Full compatibility will by it's very nature force competition into the marketplace. The MS product suite will have to prove to its userbase that it is worth spending the money to buy said product when there are other products out there that can read/write their format. This should apply to file formats other than just the office products.

2) Full disclosure/documentation of protocols. This would allow such things as the SAMBA group to allow full windows features on UNIX/BSD/LINUX machines and allow simple integration of those machines into a windows based network.

3) In the rare case where Microsoft may claim security risks, I would respectfully point out that many of the other UNICES, like FreeBSD and the different Linuxes, do not seem to have many problems with full disclosure. In any event, it should not be sufficient for Microsoft to claim security and not furnish information. They should be forced to PROVE that something would be completely rendered vulnerable if certain protocols were fully documented. This process should be overseen by at least half of Microsoft's competitors who should be able to determine if this were the case.

4) Microsoft API's should also be fully documented. This will prevent such things as company A being put out of business should Microsoft decide to implement a similar program that uses "undocumented features" to make the Microsoft product run better or more stable.

5) No bundling should be allowed in a default install. There SHOULD be an option to install additional software during the install process, but this should not be the default option. Most other OS's allow a simple base install. This will not generally include web browsers, multimedia, or instant messaging clients.

6) No exclusive licensing on the boot loader. Microsoft should not be allowed to require that only Windows be installed or that the only option shown upon booting be Windows. There should also be safeguards in place to prevent retaliation by Microsoft on this point.

The first two points I consider absolutely critical. The internet was based on fully documented, and freely available protocols. Microsoft's Active

Directory is a minor modification of LDAP and Kerberos. Both of these are widely used protocols, but they will NOT work with the Microsoft versions. This prevents competition. The Office Suite is so engrained in the corporate sector that there will not be any competition until competitors can make a fully compatible product. This will not happen until the file formats are fully documented.

The remaining points are optional. I include the third just in case exceptions for security are allowed. I am however willing to make allowances if there is some property that Microsoft licensed from another party and the license does not allow use in another product or similar situations. The fourth point I made is much like the browser issue. For a while Netscape would crash often. Certain instant messaging clients were very unstable.

The fifth point is simply to promote users to try non MS software. The option to install Internet Explorer would be available during the install, but it would no longer be mandatory. I include this due to recent events where Microsoft's website was made inaccessible to users who used the competing Opera web browser. Behavior such as this makes me extremely suspect of any guarantees by Microsoft regarding their behavior without outside oversight.

The final point is one that was already in the proposed settlement. I feel that this requirement be kept in any future proposal.

Thank you for your time.

-Christopher Corayer

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